

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## JACK DOYLE'S DAUGHTER.

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PART II. PHOEBE'S FATHERS.

CHAPTER VI. A SUDDEN LEAP.

FOR some days after Phil Nelson's adventure with the guitar, Phoebe's garden walks were uninterrupted. Stanislas Adrianski had vanished, and had left a sense of emptiness in his place which she had never known before. The withered laurel-bush, once so suggestive of boundless forests, had become but a withered laurel-bush not only in fact but in seeming, and sunset upon the snow-covered mountains was reduced to the falling of blacks upon a prospect of damp linen. Even Phil had taken himself off to distant countries with a "Good-bye" so cold and short that it had almost made her angry; and his absence made her miss her romance-hero all the more. She had known nothing of the serenade; for, just as if she had been the most sensible of girls, sentiment with her never disturbed sleep, and she had only heard of it next morning as a drunken street row—a belief which neither Phil nor Dick, for different reasons, cared to overturn.

So Phil had gone, and her hero had disappeared, and she had nothing to do but to make up her mind that life, real life, was a sadly empty and unsatisfactory condition of things. She had absolutely nothing else to do, for domestic affairs in that household were matters of minutes, and, these over, she had the rest of the day upon her hands. She could not help thinking of Stanislas, if only by way of filling up her time. Now she thought he had fallen ill: and, if so, what was the

duty of a heroine towards a hero and a patriot, sick and friendless in a foreign land? Alas! the duty, considered from a romantic point of view, was so inconveniently clear, that she gave that guess up as not to be thought of. No; he could not be ill, because that would oblige her to go and nurse him—a duty which presented such a formidable list of difficulties that she gave up conquering them even in fancy before she was halfway through. Besides, the fact of a neighbour's illness would have found its way through the party-walls, which, in their street, had tongues as well as ears. Had Phil's savage rudeness offended him? But surely a nobleman would not condescend to notice the insults of a sullen boor. Or—could it be, could it possibly be, that the patriot feared for the heart that should be his country's alone?

Such thoughts, if thoughts they can be called, do not grow weaker in solitude. She not only thought a great deal of Stanislas Adrianski, but also of the Associated Robespierres, and of the mystery of her own life; and she thought that she was thinking hard. In spite of her instincts in that direction, nature had not yet taught her to be enough of a coquette to keep resolutely indoors, so that she might learn from a corner of the window if her absence had the power to draw Stanislas into his back garden. She would learn maidenly cunning soon enough, no doubt; but, meanwhile, she behaved with a simplicity that will be called either straightforward, or only forward, according to varying views. She could not walk up and down stairs all day for exercise, or look out of the front windows all day long for pastime, so she made herself look as

nice as she could, and took a book out into the garden. And that book was Thaddeus of Warsaw.

But it was in vain. And it was with real vexation and disappointment, as if somebody had failed to keep tryst, that, after reading three pages at the rate of a page an hour, she went indoors again. She had expected nothing definite when she went out, but felt, none the less, that life was using her badly. That was the day on the morning of which Phil, at desperately short notice, had started for Russia; and her present mood made her wish him at home. She wanted to quarrel with somebody about something, and Phil would have done better to quarrel with than anybody she knew. Altogether, she was very lonesome and very dull; so much so, that by the close of another empty day she began to feel quite superior to the rest of the world, on the score of her capacity for being lonely and dull. She sought food for lofty scorn from the vulgar high spirits of the boys, and found what she sought, and listened to her father's eloquence without being able to screw herself up to the proper pitch of enthusiasm for a cause that, in the person of Stanislas, had once more become invisible to her. "Revolutions aren't made with rosewater," he had quoted to her, with his fiercest voice, over his sixth cup of tea. "No; I suppose rosewater would not go well with whisky," she had answered, without a thought of sarcasm, and with a real sigh. She felt like growing old before her time, and getting behind the scenes.

The next day she did not feel it worth while to take any particular pains to make herself look nice; she rather underdid her toilette, if anything. The garden looked so empty and ugly, that she did not care to go in, and Thaddeus of Warsaw had grown as stupid as a book could be. It was honestly without the least expectation of seeing anybody that she went out at last; just as one must when there is the barest apology for a garden, and when one is tired of being alone indoors. So her heart gave an honest leap when she heard, over the wall and behind her:

"Good-morning, mademoiselle."

Stanislas Adrianski's voice was always soft, and his accent always, even when talking about himself—perhaps especially then—caressing and tender. But it was in the coldest of tones, a tone so cold as to surprise herself, that she answered him, shortly:

"Good-morning."

There was absolutely no reason for her even pretending to be cold, and she was not pretending. And yet she felt her heart fluttering all the while. She turned round, and, in a moment, her coldness left her. Stanislas Adrianski looked very pale, and more melancholy than ever—and no wonder, for he wore a long strip of plaster from the middle of his forehead to his left cheek-bone, crossed by another strip above the eye.

"Oh, what has happened? You have been ill!" she cried.

"But it is nothing," said he. "Nothing at all. I have been wounded worse as that, twenty, thirty, forty times. I am glad—the sun shines from your garden into mine, and I forget the pain."

"But what has happened? Is it the Czar?"

"No, not the Czar. Never mind. I should not have shown myself, but I saw you, and——"

He did not finish his sentence, and she was not much attending to his words, full of romantic promise as they were. She was wishing that she had made herself look her nicest to-day, instead of yesterday. She was thinking how it always happens that when one looks for something nothing happens, and that something only happens when one expects nothing. And she might have asked herself how far she was answerable for a meeting that she had courted, though it had come without courting. She did not object to the effect of the plaster, nor, though it looked comical enough to common eyes, did it look so to hers. She did not think that the count looked like a fiddler who had been fighting at a fair. Why should a broken head be less interesting than a sprained ankle in a woman or a broken arm in a man?

"But you have been wounded——" she began.

"I tell you it is nothing. I do not make brags, mademoiselle. Only, when one insults a lady before a gentleman, what can I do? In my country we do not speech, we blow."

"Blow? Ah, I see; but who——"

"Pardon, mademoiselle. What I have done, I have done; but what I have done, nothing shall make me tell—no, not even you. We will speak of other things. I hope you are quite well."

She thought for a moment. Then a glorious hope came to her—for is it not glory to be fought about by two brave

men? If Phoebe had been told that Helen of Troy was ashamed of the fuss made over her, she would not have believed.

"Oh, please, pray tell me," she said eagerly, laying both her hands upon the wall, while her cheeks glowed; "pray tell me you have not been quarrelling with Phil!"

He removed his cigarette, bowed down, and put his lips to her nearest hand. The kiss felt like a little sting, and she snatched her hand away, looking round to be sure that Mrs. Goodge or any of the neighbours had not seen. It was the first time such a thing had happened to her, and it frightened her, while it made her proud.

"A patriot and a soldier does not lie," said he. "I did not mean to say my secret. But, as you surprise him, I cannot deny. I hear to-day he is gone—that young man. He will trouble you no more."

It did not strike her, even as a coincidence, that Stanislas Adrianski's first reappearance was on the day of his hearing that Phil Nelson had gone away. She was simply thinking that he was indeed a noble gentleman.

"And Phil said nothing about it," said she. "I am very angry with both of you—very angry indeed. Are you very much hurt? And—how was it that Phil didn't seem hurt at all?"

"If you are angry," said Stanislas, "I am miserable: the most miserable in the world. He did not seem hurt—no? Because he attacked me like a man in fury. I challenged him, I mean to say; but before I could cry 'En garde,' on he came, and with his weapon struck me where you see. Well, mademoiselle, if you will look, you will find him all over blue and black—under his clothes. I must speak the truth, since I speak something at all. I challenge, but I do not hurt the face—no. That is for cowards; and in my country we are brave. You must not be angry, mademoiselle."

"You beat Phil? Why, he is as strong and as brave as a lion! I didn't think there was a man who could beat Phil."

For a moment Stanislas Adrianski did not look quite so amiably melancholy as usual. But it was only for a moment.

"For any good cause I would do as much as that," said he, "and for your sake I would do more. For your sake I would beat him ten times."

"Once is too often," she said. "Promise me——"

"Pardon! I promise what else you will. But not to fight a man who insults you—no."

"You must be very strong and very brave. How is it your country is conquered, if all the Poles are like you?"

"Ah, mademoiselle, but they are not all like me. If they were—— But I am glad they are not, because then I should not be here."

Phoebe wanted to say something, but could think of nothing to please her. How was it that he was so ready with everything that a man ought to say? She could not, somehow, manage to think that, were Phil's skin examined, it would be found so very black or blue. But that was all the better; for, as she would scarcely have liked to think of him as being seriously damaged, she was thus able to imagine what she liked without any compunction.

"Mademoiselle," said Stanislas, after a short but impressive silence, "you know me what I seem to be. You do not know what I am. It is not the first time I challenge a man who insults a lady. But that time I did not beat with a stick. I killed him with the sword."

Phoebe started, and almost gave a little scream. It was grand and beautiful, but it was also terrible.

"You—you have killed a man?"

"I am a soldier, mademoiselle. A soldier must kill."

"Oh, in battle, of course, but—— Is she very beautiful?"

"She?"

"Didn't you say it was for a—a lady you—you killed that man?"

"Did I say that? But—I did not mean to say my secret. But, as you surprise him, I cannot deny. She was beautiful—— But, on the faith of a patriot, she is nothing to me—nothing at all. We will speak of other things. The poor Natalie! But she is nothing to you."

This was a little more than Phoebe had bargained for, and her curiosity about this new element of romance was almost more than she could restrain. To talk to a man who had killed another man for a woman's sake was better than reading Thaddeus of Warsaw for the first time. She almost felt jealous that Phil had escaped with only a drubbing. She would not have wished anything worse, of course; but it lowered her own little romance before Natalie's great one.

"It does interest me very much," she said gently. "How unhappy she must be!"

"Why?"

"To think of you, who did all that for her sake, in exile, and——"

"Oh no. After all, they console themselves, those women, for what we risk our honour and our lives. She loved me well. But not so well, when my country called me away, to say, 'Go.' I loved her very pretty well, too, but not so well as Poland—no. And so she consoles herself, and I love her no more. She is grand dame. I am the poor exile. And that is all."

"Why did you call her 'poor'?"

"Because she is rich, mademoiselle. Because she chose gold, and grandeur, and all such things, before me."

Phoebe was touched in a very weak point indeed.

"I would have said, 'Go'!" she said, not only out of her fancy, but out of her heart; "and if you had not gone, I would never have spoken to you again!"

She was certainly a girl with the most chaotic of brains, supposing her to keep such things. Even as she spoke the words, she was pleased with them as the echo of something out of some half-remembered story-book; she meant them to be effective, and yet she felt them and meant them, not thinking of how much farther they might be taken, in all simple sincerity and zeal. If she believed in shams, and in nothing else, she believed as much as she knew how, and never stopped halfway. To her confusion, Stanislas, without dropping his cigarette from his lips, placed his hands upon the low wall, and vaulted over to her side with much grace, if little dignity.

"I know it!" he said. "You would say, 'Go,' and you would make it death to go! I thank you, mademoiselle. I believe in woman once more. You wake a dead heart out of the grave."

It was indeed lucky that Phil had gone. Though he must needs be miles away, Phoebe could not help looking round for a moment out of an habitual fear of a presence that she now knew she had always feared. Stanislas took one of her hands, and smiled down upon her with an air of defiant protection.

"No," he said, "I am an exile. I am alone. I am friendless. I am poor. I have only my sword, and my name—Stanislas Adrianski, nothing more. But if you were the Queen of England, I would not be afraid. You would not say, 'Go away; I am, perhaps, great lady. I show you the door.' You will only ask, 'Is Adrianski

a patriot? Is Adrianski brave? Does Adrianski love?' And you will say, 'Yes. Adrianski is a patriot; Adrianski is brave; Adrianski loves;' for it is true, mademoiselle. I leap over the wall because you are the angel of my dream. You are the queen of the soul of Adrianski. Ah, what I suffer for you! If you have not pity—ah, what death! ah, what despair!"

This was another sort of wooing, indeed, from poor Phil's.

He was now holding both her hands, with the tender strength that is not to be denied, and her eyes were held and fascinated by the light and fire that glowed and deepened in Adrianski's. Did she love him? She no more knew that than she knew Stanislas Adrianski. But one thing she did know—that Phoebe Burden, not to speak of the adopted daughter of the Grand President of the Associated Robespierres, and a possible duchess in her own right, could not tell a poor, homeless, friendless, noble, patriot hero to leap back over the wall from the garden of hope into that of despair without a more than commonly kind word. Had he been a czar, romance itself would have compelled her to say, Go. But how could she do what Natalie had done? Where Natalie had said, Stay, Phoebe must say, Go. Where Natalie would have said, Go, was not Phoebe compelled to say, or at least to look, Stay?

It was rather a yellow afternoon, bad for health, but fairly safe for sentiment, seeing that the neighbours were not likely to be looking out of their back windows.

"Ah," said Stanislas, looking down into her eyes with a less glowing but more tender gaze, "when you know who you are—well, you will be like the rest of them; all I have ever—heard of. You will forget; and you will be consoled."

He was taking possession of her, it seemed, without doubt or question. Had Phoebe given herself and her life into the keeping of Stanislas Adrianski? She could not tell for certain; but the situation itself was claiming her. Supposing that she had given herself to him, then the charge that she, Phoebe, would or could forget and throw over a man because she turned out to be rich and great, while he remained poor, was a charge too outrageous to be borne.

"Never!" she exclaimed, speaking half for herself, the true Phoebe, but at least half for that heroine with whom, at last, and after years of waiting, she had become fully and fairly one. "How could I—how could



any woman do that—how could she do it; that other girl, I mean, who gave you up because you were unhappy; because you were so brave? The greater I was, and the poorer and more unhappy anybody was—”

“The more you would stoop and raise him up? I know; you have a soul made of diamonds and pearls. You may be a princess, and you accept the heart and the lyre and the sword of the poor patriot, the poor exile. I am in heaven, mademoiselle. Ah, but I fear!”

It was too late to ask herself if she loved him now. She knew something at last—that, whatever might happen to-morrow, she had to-day fallen into a net from which she could not escape without treason to her views of life, and a sense of being as unworthy as Natalie. Not that she wanted to escape; but it was rather sudden, this conquest by storm, and she wished this invincible hero had allowed her a little while to think everything out, and say Yes out of a little more freedom of will. And yet it was a proud thing to have love made to her by a real hero, in the real heroic, unquestioning, all-conquering style. It gave her no time to think, and thinking would have meant having to face all sorts of mean and paltry difficulties in detail from which she had been saved. In short, Stanislas Adrianski was as clearly her fate as if she had read it in large letters in the sky. Right or wrong, for good or ill, it was a glory to spend an hour in having secret and passionate love made to her, by a man like this, who had now acquired, in addition to his other attractions, the fascination of being terrible. For had he not proved that he knew how to love, not only with the heart but with the sword? He had said, “But I fear.” What could “fear” mean to such a man as he?

“Ah, but I fear,” he said again. “Say it is pride, say it is jealousy, say it is what you will. How can I tell this will not be a dream, that I shall wake to-morrow and find you have opened your wings and fled all away? I, Adrianski, am afraid. Say whatever happens, whatever comes to you, you will be true as I. You will be a princess, near to a queen, when Poland is free. But one may wait, and wait, and ah, meanwhile! Say, whatever happens, whatever comes, you will be true. Oh, mademoiselle! do not again throw me into despair! Hold my hand, and say, ‘Stanislas, my friend, whatever comes,

whatever happens, I will be true; I will be your wife, and of no other man.’”

For such absolute, downright committal as this she was certainly unprepared. In her heart she would have preferred an exciting chapter of vague feelings, secret meetings, unfettered castle-buildings, ending in something or nothing, whichever the pleasantest end might be. This pledge sounded rather solemn—a distinct pledge to a real man, who had already shown himself her master.

“Oh, don’t ask me to say that now,” she stammered, beginning to be really afraid of him. “It is late, and I must go in—”

“Now or never!” said he. “To-morrow! It may never come.”

“Oh yes it will. And there— Hark!” She started, for she heard, even in the garden, the sound of a knock at the street-door, so long and so loud as to make it probable that it was the second or third time of knocking. “Oh, please let me go now—I must go. Somebody is at the door—father, most likely, or one of the boys, and if—”

For answer he clasped both her hands more tightly. “Now or never! I go not back till you say, till you swear. Your father and your brothers may come. What do I mind?”

It was true they could not come without breaking down the door. But she was really frightened now.

“What am I to say?”

“Say—whatever happens, whatever comes, I will be the wife of Stanislas Adrianski, and of no other man.”

Again came the knock, louder than before.

“I say it—there,” she said, as she felt herself kissed quickly on both hands, on her forehead, and on her eyes. She saved her lips, and escaped into the house, while Stanislas, even more quickly, vaulted back over the wall.

#### AN AFRICAN CITY OF FLOWERS.

It was in trying to convey in the briefest manner possible an idea of one of my earliest impressions of Tunis, that I used the phrase which stands at the head of this paper.

Later and more varied experiences have added greatly to the store of memories, associations, and mind-pictures which rise before me as I think of the ancient city of “Barbarie” and its gentle inhabitants; but Tunis will always be associated in my

mind more or less with the perfume of violets and daffodils, jasmine and roses.

It must be confessed, however, that my very first impressions of the Barbary coast were quite otherwise than flowery; and very different odours recur to my mind as I recall staggering up on to the deck of the steamer lying off Goletta, after a stormy February passage. Finding that we had cast anchor, although the ship was still rolling and pitching horribly, we scrambled up on deck full of hope.

"But where is Tunis?" broke from some of us, as we looked di-mally round on a waste of rolling green water.

"Oh, you are still some distance from Tunis," was the reply; "but there is Goletta, where we land. We shall have some boats off presently to take us ashore." Looking "there" in the direction of the pointing hand, we saw a line of angry-looking crested waves tumbling in shore, and beyond that a second white line, this latter stationary—the buildings and houses of La Goletta. Presently a speck was seen rising and falling on the waves, and on a nearer approach was found to be the post-boat, manned by six stout rowers, and guided by a native pilot. We had brought the mails with us, and all Tunis was waiting for its letters and newspapers, so, rough or smooth, the bags must go ashore.

A friend, forewarned of my arrival, had taken this opportunity to send to greet me, and as his ambassador was "the post's" brother-in-law, I found my path over the waters smoothed for me, figuratively speaking. That is to say, I found myself sure of being one of the first to land. My respect for the pluck and good seamanship of the famous pirates of the Barbary coast, of terrible memory, was, I must say, greatly increased by coming to a practical knowledge of the difficulties of "boarding" in rough weather in the Mediterranean. It was clear to me that I could have picked off three or four of our boarding-party as the boat came plunging alongside, and then lay right over; while the man who was trying to grapple our chains with a boat-hook was nearly pulled into the sea, and certainly could not have defended his head at that moment against a well-directed cutlass-stroke from above. The fact, however, being that we were even rather more anxious to be boarded and deliver up the spoil—I mean the mail-bags—than the pirates—I mean the postman—were to board us and take possession, the feat was soon accomplished, and I, by favour of the

post's brother-in-law, was allowed to jump in after the bags, and twenty minutes later stepped on shore at Goletta, pretty well drenched with salt water, but otherwise safe and sound.

Goletta has no attractions to delay the passing traveller. There are small craft, with their lateen sails, darting about in the roadstead, or gliding into the little canal which conducts to the landing-steps, whose dark-faced, turbaned occupants remind the new arrival that he is in Africa; but otherwise Goletta is not much more picturesque than Sheerness-on-Sea, one part of which place, in fact, it rather resembles on a small scale, with its little draw-bridge over the canal, its blocks of bare little one-storey houses, divided from each other by hillocky little wastes of sand and rubbish, and its numerous drinking-shops and cafés, frequented by sailors of all nations. A short railway journey of about half an hour divides Goletta from the capital. The line is well-engineered, and the railway-carriages are sensibly constructed with a view to coolness and cleanliness, having nice elastic cane-bottomed seats, and a covered gallery running outside the length of the carriage on both sides, which serves the double purpose of affording shelter from the sun, and ensuring the safety of the traveller in entering and alighting from the carriages, as it slightly overlaps the platform of the station when the train is drawn up.

This railway, as most people now know, belongs to an Italian company, who bought it from its original English proprietors, in whose hands, from some cause or other, it was not very prosperous. Since it has changed owners, however, it has been in a much more satisfactory condition financially, and, in fact, the passenger traffic, especially in the summer-time, when all the Tunisians who can afford it go to Goletta for the sea-bathing, is very considerable. It is also at present the only line connecting the city of Tunis directly with the port, and hence has also a large goods traffic.

But should the French succeed in carrying out their project of constructing a new port at Rades, at the opposite horn of the bay, and connecting it by a branch line with their Bone-Guelma railway, it will establish a formidable rivalry to the little Rubattino line, and, in fact, will probably ruin it. The Italian company thought to guard against this possibility by the wording of the special promises and concessions

obtained from the Bey's government, and by the possession of documents conveying an exclusive concession to the right of constructing, if they chose, a railway round the other side of the bay. As a set-off against this, the French immediately demanded and obtained the exclusive concession of all other railways to be constructed in the Regency.

But even with this they are not content. They profess to find flaws in all the claims preferred by the Italian company, and under the new order of things it appears not unlikely that they will succeed in having all their own way, and in causing their own claims to override all other interests in Tunis.

The line from Goletta to Tunis crosses a sandy waste tract of land, and runs for some distance at the edge of the so-called Lake of Goletta, which is only connected with the sea by a narrow inlet.

On the marshy pools, and standing in the shallow waters of the lake, may be seen numerous flocks of flamingoes, with whitish necks and bodies, and wings of the most delicate rosy pink. The sudden movement or flight of these birds in any numbers has a most beautiful and curious effect, especially in the evening light. The expansion and movement of the wings, seen from a distance, produces the appearance of waves of rosy light passing over the surface of a white cloud.

The first aspect of Tunis is not striking. The town has little or nothing of architectural beauty, and, of course, the newer quarter, where the railway-station and the French hotels and the gas-lamps are to be found, is as thoroughly ugly and commonplace as new quarters seem destined to be everywhere.

Afterwards, when we came to know the place better, we found plenty of quaint picturesque bits in the narrow streets of the older portion of the city and in the bazaars. These latter are simply covered lanes, lined on both sides with little open-fronted shops, in which the proprietor sits cross-legged, bearing much the same proportion to his shop-front as a rabbit might to the open door of its hutch.

But what is most striking to the newly-arrived European, even from the first moment, is the motley character of the population, the apparently harmonious terms on which they live together, and the perfect liberty enjoyed by all.

There is no prohibition or tax on carrying arms of any description, and yet, in a popu-

lation of one hundred and fifty thousand, crimes of violence are almost unknown. When they do occur, I am sorry to say it is most frequently among our fiery fellow-subjects, the Maltese, who are, of course, only subject to the jurisdiction of the English Consular Court. The oriental part of the population gives little or no trouble to the authorities, and an Italian gentleman, long resident in Tunis, told me that during thirty years passed there, he had never carried arms either in town or country, by day or by night.

I am speaking, be it understood, of the period preceding the French occupation of the country.

There is no sharply-defined line of demarcation between the European and Arab quarters as one sees in other oriental cities. A widely extended tolerance appears to be a striking characteristic of the Tunisians, as compared with other Mahomedan peoples; and certainly in Tunis, under the Bey's government, Jews and Christians, Greeks and Turks, Nubians and Maltese, Moors and Spaniards, French and Germans, Italians and English, all pursue their various avocations peacefully side by side, and follow their own manners and customs with the most absolute freedom.

In the singularly picturesque and varied crowd which fills the streets of Tunis, whenever anything calls forth such an assemblage, the bronze-tinted Arab of the plain may be seen side by side with the scarcely less bronzed Sicilian labourer; elegantly dressed French or Neapolitan ladies pass along in startling juxtaposition with rolling bundles of clothes, surmounted by a queer pointed headdress, and supported on two stout and, generally, slightly bandy legs, whose form to above the knee is distinctly visible—this latter apparition being the outward presentment of a Tunisian Jewess. Pale-faced Levantine gentlemen, whose dress is entirely European, with the exception of the red fez, or sheshéeah, as it is called in Tunis, are jostled by negro-women, whose one petticoat is of so flimsy a texture, and apparently so carelessly adjusted, as to inspire a certain feeling of anxiety in the spectator, but who, to make amends, pile quantities of heavy woollen clothing on their heads and shoulders. The variety is, in short, endless.

Let the reader try to imagine the effect of all this during the carnival, which this year, for the first time, was regularly organised by the European community.

It was certainly a curious scene, and one



which few travellers can have witnessed. There were the usual long lines of carriages, filled with brightly-dressed ladies and pretty children, charming miniature editions of the costumes of all countries; the colossal cars filled with noisy masqueraders; the vehicles of all sorts piled with bouquets; the storm of flowers in the air; and, as a setting for the living picture, the dense crowd of Mussulmans, curious and observant, whose richly-coloured flowing garments and turbanned heads were, in many cases, more picturesque than anything the masquers had to show us.

The "one touch of nature" was not wanting either to make us Europeans think upon our common kindred. There were the boys—real street Arabs—who entered into the spirit of the thing as if they had known it all their lives: darting in and out among the carriage-wheels in defiance of the mounted Tunisian guards who kept the line, and the upraised whips of the "gentlemen of the committee" on their prancing Arab steeds, picking up the fallen flowers to pelt each other, or reselling them in great bunches for a karouba—a Tunisian copper coin worth something less than a sou—with all the spirit and all the business talents of a Roman "monellö," a Parisian "gamin," or a London street-boy.

There was just one little oriental touch to give an agreeable diversity. One flower, and often the freshest and handsomest, was, I observed, invariably reserved by the lucky finder for his own personal decoration and refreshment. The Tunisian Arabs have a passion for flowers, and as soon as their spring commences, even the poorest and raggedest may be seen with a delicately-scented blossom stuck above his ear, the stalk resting amid the folds of his turban and the flower projecting forwards over his dark cheek.

I have been told by those who have thirty years' knowledge of these people, that they will almost go without bread to buy flowers. And there is something in the sight of a gaunt, toil-worn Arab, whose sole garments may consist of a piece of coarse sacking and a ragged old turban, with a bunch of delicate spring blossoms drooping their cool freshness against his swarthy cheek, which stirs a strange mingling of sympathy and pity and admiration.

The prettiest social gathering of the whole carnival was, perhaps, the children's fancy ball, held in the theatre; for, be it known, Tunis possesses a very pretty little theatre. At this fête, naturally, there was

little to remind the spectator that he was in Africa. It had not to European eyes the charm and originality of the street scenes, and, as all fancy balls must be more or less alike, does not require a detailed description. But this particular ball was quite remarkable for the variety, correctness, and extreme richness of the costumes. The Jewish population of Tunis is very large, and includes many of the wealthiest and most prosperous citizens, and the children of this portion of the community, lovely as Jewish children so frequently are, were especially noticeable for their rich and accurate costumes.

The Greek, Albanian, and oriental dresses, of which there was a good sprinkling, were, in most cases, the real thing; fashioned of the most costly materials, heavy with gold or silver embroideries, and perfect at every point, even to the jewelled daggers and miniature scimitars of the small wearers. There was one pretty little girl whose dark eyes flashed from under the bright silken head-gear and rows of glittering coins of a Bedouin bride, who attracted much attention. This little maiden, I afterwards discovered, was the daughter of Mr. Levy, of Enfida celebrity.

One saw, of course, the usual pierrots and débardeuses, Watteau shepherdesses, and dashing matadors; but there were also many disguises, on which time and thought, as well as money, must have been expended. Such as an accurately got-up Doctor Sangrado, a tiny tambour-major of the last century, a Chinese flower-seller, and an idealised little figure of Sicily, with the symbol of the "Trinacria" artistically introduced into various parts of the dress. A noticeable figure, too, was the Goddess Flora, a fat baby-thing of some three summers; so much of a baby, in fact, that when led forth to dance, she was half smothered in the crowd of tall young persons, ranging from six to twelve years of age, and cried, and afterwards had to be carried about on the shoulder of one of the carnival committee.

Prizes were given for the best and most original costumes. And I heard, afterwards, that the first prize fell to a small couple attired in the highest fashion as a modern bride and bridegroom. In respect of elegance and correctness, even to the smallest details, the prize was certainly well bestowed, and the little bridegroom especially had fully earned it by his exemplary behaviour under trying circumstances. For though so very small as to run con-



tinual risk of being knocked down by the whirl of giant waltzers of nine or ten, and requiring, like the Goddess Flora, an occasional lift on a friendly shoulder, he did not cry once, but went through the fatiguing ceremonies of the ball with a stoicism and self-command which many a real bridegroom might have envied.

The Moors of Barbary are still famous for their saddlery, and the elegant workmanship which they bestow on all the accoutrements of their horses. The embroidery used to decorate the saddle-cloth and reins is often of the richest description; and, however elaborate may be the design, is always worked by eye, without the aid of any traced pattern.

The tourist may satisfy himself on this point by a stroll through the quarter where this kind of work is done, where he may see it in progress in the hands of the workmen sitting at their open shop-fronts.

This and the wares displayed in the perfume bazaars are perhaps the two most characteristic manufactures of the place.

The perfumes distilled at Tunis have been famous from time immemorial, and I really think the Tunisians are right when they declare that their roses are sweeter than all others.

There is one very large, rather pale rose in particular, from which the famous attar is extracted, which exhales an odour so powerful and yet so delicate, that it scarcely seems a figure of speech to speak of "odours of Paradise," and one can understand that the Mahomedan's heaven would hardly be complete without it.

But at Tunis it is not only the rose which is made to yield up its sweet breath, to be afterwards imprisoned in cunning little caskets, and sparkling crystal flasks enriched with gilding, suggesting to the wandering fancy of the Arabian Nights' haunted traveller (and who is there who is not continually haunted by that wonderful book from the moment he finds himself among oriental scenes?) the imprisoned spirit of some fairy, in eternal subjection to the powerful genii man.

The odours of the violet, the jasmine, the orange-flower, and many others are extracted with equal skill, and in the bazaars mingle their scents with the perfume of sandal-wood and other sweet-smelling woods whose names I do not know, and with that of the curious most odoriferous dark substance which the natives call amber.

If you go to buy perfumes, the vendor

will perhaps offer you a little ivory box (Arabian Nights again!) or porcelain vase containing a scented unguent for the hair, or may be a string of beads to hang round your neck; apparently thinking it of small consequence in what way you perfume your person, so that the desired odour is conveyed to the senses.

In Arab households incense and sandal-wood are frequently burnt on charcoal braziers. The Arabian women of the higher class are extravagantly fond of highly-scented earrings, bracelets, etc., and a lady told me that on being introduced into the apartment of a newly-married wife, she saw, suspended on the wall, a magnificent kind of necklace, almost as large as a collar of the order of the Golden Fleece, formed of scented woods and amber, enriched with plates and beads of pure gold finely worked. This ornament perfumed the whole apartment, and my friend was informed that in well-to-do households it was always to be found in the chamber of the newest wife.

I believe that these necklaces figure on various occasions in Mussulman households, being placed round the neck of the mother when a child is born to the house.

But it is rather difficult to get at these little secrets, the Tunisian Arabs being more than ordinarily jealous and reserved about all pertaining to the sanctity of the harem. Their rigidity on this point, and the fact that no Christian is permitted to enter any of their mosques on any pretext whatever (the European who should attempt to do so in Tunis would undoubtedly risk his life), are in strong contrast with their tolerance in most other matters, and their easy-going desire to live and let live.

They are highly imaginative and superstitious, and their religious fervour—fanaticism is, I believe, the correct term to employ in speaking of the Mahomedan religion—is undoubtedly very serious and real.

Their small superstitions are endless.

The female relative who was the companion of my travels in the Regency, paid a visit later to the family of a high court official at a time when a new member had been added to the household.

Although this member was not many days old, the two European ladies, one of whom was a perfect stranger, were introduced into the chamber of the mother and treated with every courtesy by the entire circle of relations and attendants assembled there.

The stranger asked if she might take the

baby—being, I am afraid, simply curious to inspect its clothing more nearly—and it was immediately handed to her on its embroidered pillow. The little creature's grave black eyes looked out of a nest of the most brilliant-coloured silks, two handkerchiefs of red and yellow silk enveloping its head. The smiling politeness of the Tunisian ladies did not vary when my friend imprudently said what a pretty child it was, although probably some exorcism was muttered *sotto voce* against the evil eye, and to ward off the misfortune or deformity which might thence be expected to fall on the infant. When its age was enquired, however, more precautions were taken against evil influences. After some hesitation it was declared to be eight days old. My impulsive friend was about to exclaim that it looked older and was a wonderfully fine child, when her more experienced companion checked her by a look; and afterwards explained that the child's age was probably about three weeks, but that they thought it well, under all the circumstances, not to state it correctly, "for fear of the evil eye."

Again, in paying a visit to a friend at his beautiful country house, I noticed that in the central hall, a really princely apartment, there was a defect in the pattern of the beautiful tiles lining the walls. Two tiles had been inserted upside down, forming a break in the design. "Oh, that is done against the evil eye," I was informed by a European gentleman. "Arabian nights again," thought I, as I recalled Aladdin's unfinished palace.

There is a palace in Tunis, by-the-way, which is worth a visit, if only for the sake of one dome-shaped ceiling which it contains. This is in the entrance-hall, and is a most exquisite specimen of Moorish art, being ornamented with a series of the most intricate arabesque designs, deeply cut with the knife on the mortar or stucco lining the dome. The effect is unassisted by any colour or relief of light and shade, except that of the small cavities in the work itself; but it seems as if no greater degree of beauty and elegance could have been attained by the employment of the most elaborate means.

The work occupied about three years, and the artificer had no other guide than his correct eye and his heritage of the spirit of the graceful Moorish art to aid him in his labour.

This wonderful ceiling is in the *Dar el Bey* (House of the Bey), which is, or was,

inhabited by his highness when in the capital, and by his first minister, Mustafa ben Ismail, who is his adopted son, and is treated in all respects like a member of his family.

The Bey of Tunis, like many Christian sovereigns, does not seem to be fond of his dwellings of state. He is never to be found at the Bardo, the big palace outside the gates of Tunis, which is his official residence, except when it is necessary for the transaction of public business, and only comes to *Dar el Bey* for a winter month or so, and again during the fast of *Ramadan*. In the spring and early summer he goes to *Goletta*, where he inhabits an anything but regal residence; and at other times he is to be found at the *Manoubia*, a country house about six miles out of Tunis; or, oftener still, at *Castel Said*, another country residence, with beautiful gardens, which is within pistol-shot of the Bardo itself. It was at *Castel Said* that I first had the honour of speaking with his highness, whom I found to be a vigorous man of seventy years of age, of remarkably dignified and agreeable manners. In person he is under the middle height, but his carriage and bearing are such that one does not think so at first sight. His eyes are large, dark, and extraordinarily bright, contrasting agreeably with his white beard. They seem to look through rather than at you; and it is easy to believe that when he administers justice the evil-doer would cower before that penetrating glance, and the innocent man gain courage from the thought that the Bey himself is judging his cause.

Doubtless most of my readers are aware that the Bey of Tunis is, or was, an absolute sovereign, having power of life and death over his subjects. There is no appeal from his decree, and at the weekly court of justice held at the Bardo, the principal actors and witnesses in the cases to be tried are introduced into his presence, and after hearing the evidence on both sides, he then and there publicly pronounces judgment. His native sagacity, and, latterly, the experience of a thirty years' reign, enable him to do this with astonishing quickness, and, I am told, with almost unerring justice. Such, at least, is the opinion of his own subjects, who highly value the privilege of being judged by their sovereign in person.

An old resident in the country told me that, prominent among the causes of discontent which were rife during the rebellion

of 1864, were certain reforms proposed to be introduced at European instigation, one of which was to establish something like a trial by jury in local courts all over the Regency.

Whatever be the defects of a despotic form of government in our eyes, it appears to have been preferred by the Tunisians, and certainly, under the rule of the present Bey, has been attended with but few of those dark deeds of personal revenge which defile the histories of so many oriental governments.

There have not been wanting incidents in the reign of Mahomed-es-Sadock when, tempted by the absolute irresponsibility of his position, he has done deeds which had better have been left undone; but they have been few. He is by no means a cruel bloodthirsty tyrant, as some of his French friends have thought fit to describe him. He has been always, for instance, most averse to giving the order for capital punishment, and in one case, some years ago, in which a man was slain, and the life of the murderer justly forfeited according to the law, though with what we should call "extenuating circumstances," the Bey, whose sense of justice had forced him to pronounce the sentence, afterwards offered to the family of the victim, from his own private purse, the sum of "blood-money" often accepted as a compromise for such offences, where it can be shown that the murder was not vindictive or premeditated. In this case, however, the relatives, although very poor, declined to accept the "blood-money," the son of the murdered man saying:

"I do not say that there were no excuses for the crime, but if I accept that money I can no longer live here. If I wear a new pair of shoes, my neighbours will say they were bought with my father's blood. No; I must have justice."

And the Bey—I must say I think to his honour—acquiesced, and said:

"Let justice be done!"

In our complex civilisation, we should, of course, feel it right to ponder and argue both these points; but, going back to the principles of strictly human equity, we must, I think, find something admirable in the absolute sovereign who yielded his own desire to abstract justice, and the subject who sacrificed a fortune, not to vengeance, as he admitted, but to an ideal of honour.

Towards Europeans the Bey is most generous and friendly, and he shows, or did show, a special regard towards

those of English nationality. But this I observed to be the case with all, from the sovereign himself down to the meanest of his subjects. It would be difficult to say what we have done to deserve it, but the fact is so, or was until a few weeks ago. My nationality has been demanded by a poor Arab under his black goatskin tent, and on its transpiring that I was "Ingleez," a frank smile and an extended hand were the immediate response, and I was informed that the Arabs liked the "Ingleez" because they thought he told the truth, and did not profess friendship with any after-thought of gain.

The Bey is very proud of possessing the Order of the Bath, bestowed on him by our Queen. Her portrait hangs in his private apartment, where it is the only picture which decorates the walls. When the Prince of Wales visited Tunis about twenty years ago, he was, I believe, the only guest for whom the innovation was made of preparing an apartment for him under the Bey's own roof at the same time that the palace was inhabited by all the family and household.

On the occasion of my first presentation to the Bey, my companion was at the same time introduced to the Lellah, by which title the chief wife of the Bey is known, and also to the wife of the minister Mustapha, so that I afterwards learnt from her some of the secrets of the harem. The Lellah was described to me as an elderly lady, wonderfully well preserved, and very richly dressed, her arms, neck, fingers, and ears being adorned with jewels of great value. She has never been a striking beauty, but has regular features, and a most pleasing, kindly expression, together with perfectly simple, agreeable manners.

The minister's chief wife is a very pretty little personage, and intelligent to boot. She appears to be four or five and twenty, and possesses a well-shaped face, with handsome dark eyes and very white teeth. These ladies, it would appear, do not use paints or cosmetics, except for the embellishment of the hair, eyes, and eyebrows. It is not unusual to paint a small dark sign (like the "patch" of a beauty of the last century) on the forehead. One of these, in the form of a trefoil, adorned the pretty face of the minister's wife, just between the eyebrows, and was declared by her English female critic to be most becoming.

The dress of the Tunisian woman in her own house is invariable in form, the out-

ward difference between a princess and her slave consisting only in the richness of the materials. The costume consists of trousers, which fit closely to the leg from a little above the ankle to the knee; this part is generally richly embroidered or braided. From the knee upwards they are looser. The upper part of the dress consists of a vest, over which is worn a loose shapeless jacket, closed in front, with wide hanging sleeves. But this garment is very short, only just covering the hips; and, taken in connection with a highly-ornamental head-dress, from which depends a flowing veil of silk or gauze, the first aspect of the whole costume conveys to European eyes the startling impression that the otherwise elegant wearer has forgotten to put on her petticoat. Such, at least, was the idea which occurred to the English lady to whom I am indebted for this description. Very fine silk stockings and embroidered slippers without heels cover the feet of a Tunisian town lady, which are generally small and pretty.

The suite of rooms in which the princesses receive, and through which the Lellah led her English visitor by the hand as a mark of honour, are richly decorated. There is a fatal taste for Parisian upholstery, which, to a certain extent, vulgarises the spacious and handsome rooms; but the eye is consoled every now and then by carpets, divans, or hangings of real oriental manufacture, whose rich and harmonious colouring and dull soft textures repay one for wandering through these partly Europeanised apartments, with their looking-glass walls and gaudy French clocks. Of the latter there are, I believe, nineteen in one of the larger apartments.

But there was one thing even worse than the gilding and the clocks. In some magnificent Swiss vases (a present from Louis the Fourteenth to a former Bey) were stuck bunches of common gaudy artificial flowers—artificial flowers in Tunis, of all places in the world!

Well, princesses who live in perfumed halls, and can have the real or the false at will, may perhaps be pardoned such an error in taste, in consideration of their kind intentions to honour European fashions. But it is to be hoped that the poor Arab will not be speedily "civilised" into preferring a miserable scrap of coloured muslin or paper to the fresh rosebud or carnation he sticks above his ear.

Of all merely sensuous pleasures, those conveyed by the delicate tints and sweet

perfumes of flowers are surely the most refined and poetical. The extravagant fondness of the Tunisian Arabs for these lovely objects, although not an important trait, seems to me to be indicative of character to a certain extent, and, one fancies, has relation to much that is so gentle and agreeable in the denizens of my African City of Flowers.

## IN THE SUNNY RHINELAND.

### IX.

SUNDAY in Schlangenbad is just as bright and cheerful on that as any other day. The band plays one out of bed in the morning; the old bath-master for once seems actually pleased to turn on his taps of hot and cold—carriages are in request; donkeys rattle about with their gay trappings; and the girls with the baskets of roses offer their bouquets with their usual unconcern.

We have a pastor here, it is true, but he is beaming with good-natured satisfaction. He chucks the flower-girls under the chin—I won't swear he does not kiss some of them, as he trots up and down the pleasant sunny walk, in the long gown that streams behind him, the velvet cap, and crisp Lutheran bands, full of a patriarchal kind of bonhomie. But, after all, there is a considerable procession of people filing up the hill with hymn-books, and presently appears the grand duchess herself with a bigger hymn-book than anybody, and thereupon our pastor feels it is time to begin.

My window commands a view of the little chapel. And presently I hear the sounds of psalmody, a leisurely self-contented psalmody, evidently led by capacious elders, but sustained by the fresh sweet voices of children. It has a strangely familiar sound, such as one can remember welling out of country chapels long ago in the midst of orchards and cherry-gardens, and green daisy-pied meads. The sermon, too, seems familiar, although I can hear nothing of it but the sustained monotone, rising and falling a little, so lulling to the sleepy heads of youth. A pause, it is over; no, it is another head—seventhly, and lastly; but this is the longest of all—a regular double-headed performance in the way of pulpit oratory. But it is over at last; another hymn, and the congregation stream out, not a powerful stream, as far as numbers go, but with an air of that cheerful relief which so often seems one of



the common feelings of humanity in leaving a place of worship. And the pastor appears quite as pleased as any of the rest.

The vicomte has left, Madame Reimer has just told us. He found Schlangenbad too unexciting—no *baccarat*, no *écarté*. His family, it seems, blame John's wife very much. She might very well have permitted him to adore her for a time; indeed, she might have been the means of reclaiming him from his evil—that is to say, expensive courses; but to dismiss him thus brusquely was not at all *comme il faut*. Thus we may expect a coolness on their part towards us. They have, indeed, asked Madame Reimer to join them for the rest of their stay at the baths. But she has refused to leave us. Now the effect of all this, joined to the Korloff business, has been to strengthen very much the bonds of amity between our little party, which before were, perhaps, getting a little, just a little strained.

It is so sometimes in life as well as in dream. Across the smooth pleasant path a chasm suddenly opens of which the depth cannot be guessed, and yet there is no stopping. But our little chasm is happily closed and the turf firm beneath our feet.

To crown all, it is a heavenly evening, neither chilly nor sultry, but of soft genial warmth. Curious waved clouds glow in the evening radiance, and as darkness comes on, the sky assumes a deep purple hue, studded with golden stars. The fountain to-night dances with joyful buoyancy, and the warm spray it scatters over the flower-beds seems to take life in the foliage and float away in wandering flakes of light. They are marvellous mysteries, these wandering lights, that might be chips broken from falling stars, and they are everywhere: sometimes rising high in the air, sometimes drifting close to the shaven lawn; fireflies, indeed, only fireflies, but coming with all the charm of unexpectedness; we have seen none before, we shall see no more of them, they come to adorn this one perfect night.

Thorough Schlangenbadians as we are, we find it incumbent upon us to pay a formal visit to Schwalbach. John and I set out one day after dinner, intending to drive back by diligence. The wood winds among the hills, following the course of a tiny stream, which, tiny as it is, keeps green and bright a respectable strip of meadow on either hand. Here and there is a mill, but plain and prosaic, as if millering were too good a business to

allow of picturesqueness, and with the mill goes a prosperous-looking farmstead, with one of its sheds cleared out and arranged with benches and tables, and "Restauration" in large letters on a board. Nobody is there, but we are told that on Sundays and holidays the water-wheel is stopped and the beer wheel turned on, the benches are well filled, the tables covered with jugs and bottles. It is a device this, worth recommending to the British agriculturist in these hard times.

As the valley widens out and strips of cultivated land succeed the wooded hillsides, a village appears. Its name is announced conspicuously on a board by the roadside, with a description of the particular company, regiment, corps to which this little village belongs, and where its mustering-place. There is nothing warlike in the aspect of the quaint little village itself, with its prim church, its rambling Gasthaus, tidy little shops, and comfortable, cosy-looking houses. The grocer is at work at his books, the waggoner has halted his team at the Gasthaus, and is refreshing himself after the manner of waggoners; the carpenter is sawing a balk of timber; and a tall burly veteran, in a very small garden, gravely passes in review his crops: his row of three small cabbages, his little patch of beans, his one rose-bush, and the half-dozen flowers that grow on his borders.

Beyond, on the hillside, the villagers are hard at work in their patches of land, their wives as well, and the old cow drawing a bush harrow. The young women are at the well for water, or boiling the kettle, or busy with the needle—not failing to leave their various occupations and enjoy a good look at the passing strangers—while the old grannie sits in the sunshine in the doorway busily knitting, and thinking of other days when the sun was brighter and warmer than now. But at this moment a little bell might ring in some unapproachable office in Berlin, and at the touch of a wire the whole scene might be changed. The villagers might be called in from the hillside, the carpenter throwing down his saw and leaving his balk half cut, the grocer debiting his last sale and stepping out as Sergeant Würze, while the veteran turns his back on cabbage and beans, and casts his eye over the little squad with critical appreciation. And so would march away all the able-bodied men of the village, while the women would go with them for a little way, and then sadly watch the

moving patch of dust along the white road, till lost to sight "over the hills and far away"—all which is very unlikely to happen just now, but still the possibility gives a certain interest to the scene, and, perhaps, adds a certain zest to the even tenor of this quiet rural life.

A noticeable thing is the quantity of wild flowers that grow by the roadside, with the contrasts and harmonies of their varied hues, and the richly-coloured crags and points of rock that rise even from the midst of the garden-like cultivation of the village patches. But we soon leave behind the peasant crofts, and come to a wide expanse of rolling country, from the higher points of which we get grand views of the swelling hills of the Rheingau, and of the long undulating Taunus range, with a gleam of the Rhine winding its way through the wide valley. At the crest of the hill the streams divide; the little rivulet we have just left making pretty straight tracks for the Rhine, while the stream that rises on the other side of the hill joins the Lahn, and then passing Ems on its way, only reaches the Rhine just opposite Coblenz. Strange to say, on this high ground we hear the shrill whistle of a steam-engine, and, by the roar and rattle, evidently a locomotive—a thing not rich or rare in itself, but how did it get there, with no railway-line within miles? But there it is, a full-blown contractor's engine, running to and fro with ballast trucks on a short line beginning and ending in nothing. How was it hauled up here, and how will it be slid down? The thing remains a mystery to this hour.

But a more alarming phenomenon for us presents itself. This is the diligence slowly lumbering up the hill.

We have lost too much time looking for points of view, and now, if we walk to Schwalbach, we shall have to walk back again, or hire a carriage. Besides, the evening is drawing on. No, we must leave Schwalbach unvisited. Can we say that we have seen it? Yes, surely that clump of trees marks the little valley where it lies, and so we trudge home satisfied.

But next morning comes a blow, a decided facer. We have been here four days, and on this, the fifth day of our stay, there comes a knock at the door, which I take for the postman's, and cry "Come in" unsuspectingly.

Is it? Yes, I believe it is really the friendly violin, but instead of the case of his instrument, he carries a big book under

his arm, and a small book in his hand. He has assumed, too, that rigid stoniness of demeanour that shows the official. He is no longer a musician, but a collector of the kingly bath-tax.

"It is twelve marks," he observes severely.

But I have paid for my baths already. That, of course, but it has nothing to do with the kur-tax.

"It is twelve marks," with still severer emphasis.

An emphasis so severe that I feel it is useless to ask him to call again, or to intimate that I will make enquiries, or that I will write to the head tax-office on the subject. I drag forth my purse reluctantly, and then a bright thought occurs.

"Can't I shelter myself under John's assessment in the case of a family?" now I ask.

"If the respectable Herr had a family he would pay for each member at the reduced rate of nine marks."

"Very well then, I belong to the family of the respectable Herr downstairs, and will only pay nine shillings."

The collector shakes his head.

"A family is wife and children; no others are allowed to plead family ties."

And so I yield the point and my twelve shillings at the same time.

Has the collector visited the respectable Herr downstairs? No, he begins his collection at the top and works downwards. I feel more cheerful at hearing this. I shall hear news of John before long, then. Indeed, a few minutes afterwards John bursts into the room.

"Did you ever hear anything so iniquitous. Thirty-three shillings demanded for a tax. I'll never pay it. They may send me to Spandau if they like."

And then appeared John's wife in her dressing-gown, with her hair all hanging loose.

"John, don't be foolish; you must pay. Oh," turning to me, "do persuade him to pay."

"Nonsense!" cried John; "I'm not a child. I'll go to Spandau!"

"Very well," said Mrs. John, white and desperate. "I don't mean to go to prison with you. Perhaps you, sir," turning to me again, "will see me safe to my mother's roof?"

"He," cried John. "He will be in prison with me, for, of course, he doesn't mean to pay."

"But I have paid," I faltered.

John threw up his hands, while his wife clasped hers in thankfulness.

"Of course," said John, after a pause, "if you've paid there's nothing more to be said. I could have made a stand, but when I'm deserted in this way—Amy, pay the man and get rid of him."

Amy did not require a second bidding, but ran downstairs to settle with the tax-collector.

When we had a little cooled down, we agreed that while it was only fair that we should make some payment for the expenses of band, reading-room, and so on; yet that it was decidedly unfair to make the flying visitor of a week pay as much as people who stop the whole season. A daily payment would be more just, with an alternative tax for the whole season.

Knowing people, who have studied the thing, contrive by never staying more than four consecutive days at one bath-place, to avoid the tax altogether, and save their travelling expenses handsomely by the method. Thus they will go from Kreuznach to Schwalbach, and from Schwalbach to Schlangenbad, and then to Wiesbaden and Baden-Baden, and round to Ems, perhaps, with no taxes to pay, and the pleasure of variety and change of scenery. However, now that I have paid my tax, I march about as if the place belonged to me, feeling that I have contributed a most handsome sum to its maintenance, at twelve times as high a rate as the grand duchess herself, who is staying for three months, while I shall be away within the week.

And the week runs away very quickly. The conjuror has given his entertainment. I hoped at one time that there might be a tremendous run upon it so that I might negotiate some of my tickets. But, alas! no. I fancy old Koriloff sold a good many tickets, he had such an insinuating way with him. I believe he would have prevailed upon me to take tickets had I not been already provided. But the people did not come. As a rule, they won't turn out at night for anything but music. And so Koriloff cut the entertainment short, and presently John came to fetch me. Old Koriloff wanted us to come and have some supper with him. His daughter was going to sing, and she sang divinely.

So altogether we had a very pleasant evening, enjoyed ourselves I daresay a great deal more than if we had been entertained by Prince Lorikoff in reality. And there

was one day to pack up, to settle with the washer-wife, or, what was better, with the pretty blooming washer-maiden, and to wander about and pay farewell visits to the little haunts which had somehow become quite familiar and home-like. And there was the house-reckoning to be paid, a complicated, but, happily, not formidable undertaking.

I confess that my reckoning with the kingly commissary for my room put me into a good humour. One looks for some kind of extra, either expressed in the bill or understood in the expectant attitude of servants. But here there was nothing of the kind. Just fourpence for candles, and nothing in the world else except the shilling a day. "Give the man who cleaned your boots a trifle," says the kingly official, "but nothing else."

But this last is an injunction difficult to carry out when there is a rosy-cheeked chambermaid who says "guten morgen" so prettily. Then there is the bill of the restaurateur, everything charged at the established tariff, which is quite reasonable, and not a kreutzer more.

John, too, finds his bill reasonable enough, but the kur-tax has entered his soul. "It is worse than the dog-tax," he groans. But, even though we applaud his little joke, his discontent is not thereby appeased.

We are going on to Wiesbaden by the early diligence, and then by rail, having taken tickets at the post-office overnight, and this involves early rising. Why didn't we always get up at this time of the morning? is our united exclamation. For the air is inexpressibly fresh and sweet, and the hills are shining through the light haze of morning. The peasants are trudging to their work, and bright-looking maidens come tripping to the spring. A girl draws up a little cart, and presently establishes her stall by the piazza for the sale of milk, while a grizzled old man appears with a second equipage, where he forthwith instals his daughter, who deals in mineral waters and wine.

The ladies cry out for milk, but the milk-girl will supply none for cash. The sight of raw money seems repugnant to her feelings. "Nein, nein!" she cries; and not even silver will tempt her. You must have a ticket, you must be a regular subscriber, or else no milk; and smart subscribers come tripping up with their cards, and carry off milk, and one of the Parisian *femmes-de-chambre* even, looking very yellow and discontented. It is Madame de

Beaulieu's maid, by-the-way, and when she has discounted her ticket, she catches sight of Madame Reimer and advances with an injured air. If madame could see madame for one little moment before she leaves? Madame Reimer says that she will come, and Justine retires, indulging in an irrepressible yawn as she moves away. In the meantime, breakfast has been laid in the piazza, and, after all, tea is better than raw milk for civilised beings at an early hour of the morning. The fountain murmurs a soft farewell as the breeze carries it to and fro in showers of spray that sometimes catch beautiful rainbow hues from a glancing sunbeam. And the birds fly twittering about us, quite delighted to find people with such sensible bird-like notions on the subject of early breakfasts.

And now, adieu Schlagenbad! For we hear the brake grating against the wheel as the diligence comes down the hill. And, indeed, the porter, who has been on the look-out, warns us that the vehicle is in sight. And still Madame Reimer has to visit her dear friend. Well, she will not be one little minute, and the diligence will surely wait two or three! And the comtesse has her quarters in the lower Kurhaus, which is on the way to the post-office.

And so John hurries down with his wife to the office, while I take care of Madame Reimer, undertaking to bring her, dead or alive, in time for the diligence. And I stand sentinel outside while Madame Reimer has her little minute with her friend.

The post-office is well in view from the verandah where I stand, and I can see the diligence, which has already drawn up, and the little group of passengers by the door of Zur Poste. The baggage is hoisted up. I have the satisfaction of recognising my own modest portmanteau, and seeing it well thumped on its way to the roof. The conductor has given out the baggage-tickets, and the driver is about to clamber up to his seat. If you delay another instant, Madame Reimer, we shall be left behind. And then she appears, half laughing and half crying, while the comtesse, wholly crying, shows herself for a moment.

"Adieu, monsieur. Take care of Gabrielle!"

We reach the diligence, and are thrust in, breathless, just as everybody's patience has reached its last gasp.

## ULSTER FOLK-LORE.

### THE GREEDY EYE AND THE EVIL EYE.

THE collector of folk-lore in Ulster finds many superstitions brought from Scotland by the settlers, as well as legends and fancies peculiar to the Irish population. The latter consist principally of fairy tales and ghost stories, many of them very poetical and graceful; and the former chiefly of superstitions regarding good and bad luck, and tales of witchcraft, which are more weird than poetical.

But as the two races have mingled in the course of three centuries, so their folk-lore has lost something of its distinct characteristics, though preserving them in the main. Thus the Presbyterian will sometimes tell of his adventure with the fairies, and the Roman Catholic will assure you that the butter has been spirited out of his churn by a "witch-wife."

Most old and middle-aged people of the cottier class in Ulster have strong ideas on the subject of luck. To enter a house where churning is in progress without washing your hands, taking the churn-staff in them, and "giving the churn a brash," is thought the acme of ignorance; and on leaving the house it is de rigueur that you should say, "God bless your churn, an' gie you the good of your milk an' butter." If a neighbour comes in to borrow a coal or turf, and neglects this formula, he lays himself open to the worst suspicions, and the people of the house will be sure to throw a pinch of salt into the churn as soon as his back is turned.

To receive alms without blessing both giver and gift is considered very wrong. The present writer was in her kitchen lately when a beggar was helped by the servants, and she was surprised to see the cook run after the woman and bring her back. The cook explained the proceeding thus. "She took we'er meal an' praties, ma'am, an' she didna bid God bless we'er house an' place. She'll just bless the house an' place before I let her go."

A certain old pedlar, a kind of Edie Ochiltree, welcomed alike in cabin and farmhouse for his story-telling powers, was given a little jugful of sweet milk one day, with which he was leaving the house much pleased. Two children ran to the door as he crossed the room, and startled him so that he let the jug fall. His joy was turned into lamentation, and he angrily complained that the children had "blinked" his milk. He thinks it lucky to meet a



horse and cart when he is setting out upon a journey, and will wait, leaning his pack against a ditch, for an hour until one appears in sight. He earns all the tobacco he smokes by curing elf-shot animals, and his skill is widely believed in.

The Down and Antrim peasants on their way to fair or market will turn back if they meet a red-haired woman. The people of Tyrone and Armagh think it quite as unlucky if the first person they encounter should happen to be a barefooted woman. Others are uneasy if anybody runs across their path, or takes a short cut; and others again are miserable if a neighbour should make any remark about the animal they have purchased without praising it and wishing the owner luck of it.

Old people say that the proper thing to do on meeting a fine horse or cow is to lay your hand upon it, saying, "Dear, but thou's the purty horse or cow! God gie you luck wi' it."

In some counties no well-minded persons will make any remark whatever about any neighbour in his or her presence without adding, "God bless you." This custom has reference to belief in a greedy eye.

There are people by whom it is not good to be admired. The fate of bonnie Rosie Carlin is still told in Letterkenny with sighs and shakes of the head. Rosie was standing at her father's hearth when a poor farmer from a distant parish came in to beg a little seed corn to sow his land. He was given what he asked, but he still stood at the door staring at Rosie and muttering, "Dear, but she's handsome,—dear, but she's handsome!" but, as her parents afterwards remembered, without saying, "God bless her." The sequel to his admiration was most disastrous. Rosie had been plump and strong, and rosy like her name; she began to pine away from that moment, lost flesh and colour, and died soon afterwards.

We asked the woman who told this story why the poor farmer's glance had been so fatal.

"He was one that had a greedy eye," was the answer. "There's them that has a greedy eye; an' if they look at a nice wean, or a handsome girl, or a cow wi' a good show of milk, some ill will be sure to follow; an' it'll be no fault of theirs, for they canna help it. It was the fault of their mothers for half weaning them an' then giving the breast back to them when they cried an' fretted an' kept them frae their sleep. There's plenty of mothers does that, an' the poor child has a greedy

eye ever after. There was a farmer, a very respectable man, a neighbour of my own, an' his wife wouldna let him see his childer till they were six weeks old, his eye was that unlucky, an' him that fond of them he was just doting about them. If the people wad meet him, an' them going to sell a beast, they'd turn back, an' feen a bargain they'd try to strike that day. They wouldna like to see him cross their fields or look at their crops; but there was very little said about it, the man was that respectable."

A Kilmacrenan woman tells the following story of another of these unlucky people:

"There was a man owned a good farm of land an' lived hot an' full. But it was noticed that things went wrong wi' him, an' he couldna look at a single thing he had without doing it harm. His wife would ha' made him lie wi' his face to the wall till she riz the childer in the morning an' give them their breakfast, for if he'd ha' looked at them an' them fasting, something unfortunate would ha' occurred to them. It was the same wi' his cows an' horses, till he nearly stopped going into his fields. The woman was a second cousin of my own, an' she tould me how it was he was cured."

"Why, Bell, I did not think a cure was possible."

"There is cures, miss dear, an' this was how it happened: he hired a boy frae the Sheriff's Mountain—they're very knowledgeable in them back countries—an' the boy heered the way it was wi' the master. He was ploughing soon after he come, an' he sent for the master to see what he had done. The man was na willing to come; but the boy sent again an' fleeced him out, an' while he was coming he set up a big stone in the field, for he knewed that the first thing the man's eye lit on wad be the thing the harm wad be done to. Weel, as I was sayin', the master come out, an' his eye lit on the stone first, an' it split in two wi' a loud noise. I ha' seen the stone mysel'—split in two paerts. The man was cured, an' his eye never did any harm after that."

The evil eye is a very much worse thing than the greedy eye, because it has been gained by a compact with the enemy of mankind.

"There isna as many witches now as there used to be in times gone by," said an old man the other day.

He possessed a fine cow, and over the room that served him for a dairy he had nailed a large horseshoe to keep witches

and fairies away. Observing the horse-shoe, and knowing very well why it was there, we took the opportunity of asking if witchcraft was active in the country just then.

"There was witches an' warlocks in plenty when I was a wee boy," said Davie, "but there isna many o' them now. Maybe because the Scriptures is spread abroad, an' the people isna just as ignorant as they used to be. It's allowed the bad man hasna the same power. Will I tell you what happened, to my grandfather's own knowledge, at the graveyard-wall, near St. Johnston?"

"Please do, Davie," and we composed our features to the gravest attention.

"There was an Ellie Connolly that had a bad name in the country, an' it was said she could tak' all shapes she pleased when she went out marauding an' stealing. Whiles she'd be a cat or a hare, an' suck the cows in the byres or in the fields. My grandfather was acquaint wi' her, an' often he'd ha' gone into her house for a light for the pipe.

"He was passing the graveyard-wall one evening, him an' a little dog he had, when a cat leaped down frae the wall an' attacked his dog. She snarled an' scratched, an' he barked an' yelped; but my grandfather seen that his dog was getting the worst of it, so he aimed a stone at the cat, an' she limped off mewing maist pitiful.

"It was the next day he was passing Ellie Connolly's, an' he went in as usual for a crack an' a light for the pipe. 'Where's your mother?' says he to the daughter that was spinning in the kitchen. 'She's in the room there,' says she. 'An' why is she in the room?' says he. 'She's lying,' says she, 'it's just sick she is.' 'What's her sickness?' says he. 'I'll not tell you,' says she; 'it's no business o' yourn.' 'Troth, it is my business,' says he, 'for your mother an' me's very big. I be to ax her what way she is.' The daughter tould him he wouldna get seeing her mother, an' she got up an' stood before the room-door, but my grandfather pushed her away, an' went up to the bed where Ellie was lying. 'What is it ails you, Ellie?' says he. 'Sure you see I'm sick, Davie Doherty.' 'Ay, but what ails you?' says he, for he juped (i.e. suspected) what it was, an' wi' that he pulled down the clothes an' seen that her arm was lying broken. 'What done that on you, Ellie?' says he. 'Oh, Davie Doherty, Davie Doherty,' says she, 'weren't you the

hardened man to hit me wi' a stone an' break my arm?' 'Why did you attack my dog then, Ellie?' says he. Weel, she was forced to give up her bad ways after that, an' the neighbours got milking an' churning in peace; but there was nae mair plentiness in her house; it was like other poor cottier houses in the country."

"How did she get the power to turn herself into a cat?" we asked.

"Some says," replied the old man, rubbing his head and looking reflective, "that witches touch their heads an' the soles of their feet on Midsummer Night's eve, an' gie themselves up to the Evil One for a year an' a day, sayin' some words o' a charm."

"Do you know the words?"

"God forbid, ma'am! But others says they go out on May morning before sunrise, an' trail a rope, made of hair frae the cows' tails, over the grass while the dew is on it, singing: 'Come all to me, come all to me, milk an' butter come to me.' 'Deed my grandfather seen them at it, an' he was a man that wouldna ha' told a lie no more nor the clergy in the pulpit."

"I'm sure of it, Davie. It was he who broke Ellie Connolly's arm, wasn't it?"

"Ay, ma'am, it was. As I was sayin', he seen two auld wives, neighbours that he knewed rightly, trailing a rope along the grass, an' he heered them singing:

"'Come all to me, come all to me,  
Milk an' butter come to me.'

"'Would you steal we'er butter from us?' says he, an' wi' that he jumps over the hedge an' snatches at the rope. He pulled an' they pulled, an' half o' the rope came away in his hands. The scare was that big on him that he didna stop to see what they'd do next, but home wi' the piece o' rope, an' throwed it down in a corner o' his father's house. They'd one cow near the calving, an' it was only a wee drop she was giving, but that morning there was a quare milking. My grandfather was a wee chiel then, but he minded it to his dying-day. He saw his mother fill piggin after piggin, an' pail after pail, till all the vessels in the house was full. She was quarely frightened, an' when he tould her about the rope, she throwed it on the fire, for she said she'd ha' no witches' wark in that house."

Variations of the same tale meet us in every county in Ulster. Sometimes the witch is hunted in the form of a hare for a whole winter.

A large black hare baffled the Derry harriers for an entire season some years ago, and the country people said it was no wonder she escaped, for she was no real hare—she was old Fanny Callaghan, and the devil helped her.

A white hare lived for many years on the island of Inch, in Donegal. She disappeared in 1858, the year Rose Martin, the "white wife," died.

Sometimes the hare is seen making her way to a cottage, and there the scent is lost. The huntsman of the Tullyannan harriers is reported to have seen a hare escape from the very jaws of the hounds and make for a hole in the wall of a cabin. Unable to believe his eyes, and trembling with superstitious dread, the man dismounted and went into the house, where he found no living creature of any description excepting Dan Murphy, the shoemaker, lying on his bed panting, unable to speak from loss of breath, and bleeding from a wound in his leg which looked like the bite of a dog.

A County Antrim woman tells the following story:

"Francis Dillon had three cows on his farm in Cushendall, an' one o' them, the best o' the three, failed in her milk, an' not a drop could be got from her. Says the wee boy that herded the beasts: 'Master,' says he, 'I seen a white cat sucking Moiley in the field.' Francis loaded his gun wi' siller, an' watched for the cat next evening. Sure enough there she came, an' he fired an' wounded her, but she was fit to make off. Francis was a man that had a great skill in setting bones, an' he was sent for by the neighbours as regular as the doctor. That night there came an express for him to go to Rose Mullan that had got her leg broke. (Rose was allowed to be a witch-wife frae Cushendall to the Giant's Causeway.) When Francis heered that her leg was broke, of course he knowed what to think. Says he, 'It was me did you the injury, an' it's me you get to mend it,' says he, an' Rose an' her man hadna a word to say."

"A poor traveller looking for her bit"—i.e. a beggar-woman—tells the following story.

The narrator was once a servant in a lodging-house at Bundoran, a fashionable watering-place, filled with bathers in summer; and Biddy Gallagher, her cousin, was housemaid in the hotel next door.

When the bathing season was over, Biddy remained alone in the hotel to

take charge of the premises. Her wages were good, but she disliked the loneliness of her life, especially at night, when the wind blew off the ocean and rattled every window.

She dusted and cleaned and lit fires in the empty rooms during the day, and before retiring each night she swept up the kitchen, made a bright fire, and left everything comfortable there.

One night, before she put out her candle, she heard the hall-door open, and, full of terror, jumped out of bed and ran to the head of the stairs to listen. There were many footsteps in the hall, and many voices were talking. The voices were all saying, "Good-bye, Miss Gallagher! Good-bye, Miss Gallagher! an' thank you kindly for your fire! We're away to the County Cavan; but you'll find an oat-cake, made of the best grain of Tyrone, on your parlour-table. Eat that to your tea, an' good-bye."

Terribly frightened, Biddy ran back to her room, and there was her sister Kitty, that was lost one Hallowe'en, lying in her bed. "Biddy! Biddy!" cried Kitty, starting up, "dinna taste their cake, or they'll have you away wi' them, as they took me." She disappeared as she spoke. Biddy utterly refused to remain any longer alone, and her cousin, who tells the story, came to keep her company.

The gentle race, now banished from the green banks of the Foyle, haunted that fertile valley some sixty years ago.

It was in 1820 that the McElhinney family went to live on a little farm between Porthall and Strabane, in sight of the river. Joe McElhinney was a mischievous lad of seventeen, and he soon became intimate with lads who were as fond of tormenting as himself. There was a stretch of gravel for a short way along the Foyle, two or three fields below his house, and there the young girls of the country used to bathe. When Joe and the other lads found this out, they made a practice of hiding the girls' clothes, till at last two girls were always obliged to remain sentinels while the others bathed. But one summer day the lads found no sentinels. They peeped over the hedge, and saw all the girls in the water. Maggie Lavens, with her floating yellow hair, Jenny McBride, Ellen Morrison, towering a head above the rest, and beside her little Annie Kearney, with her sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks.

"Ay, there they are, an' there's your Kate," said Joe to one of his companions. The girls looked up and laughed; then,

taking hands, they danced about in the water, and at last did what no mortal girls could do—swam across the Foyle and were seen dancing on the Tyrone shore. Very much alarmed, the lads hurried to the different cottages in the neighbourhood. The girls were all at their spinning-wheels—Maggie, the yellow-haired, little Annie Kearney, Jenny McBride, and Ellen Morrison.

"It put us from playing a trick on anyone for many a day," said Joe McElhinney, looking across the Foyle with dim wistful gaze at the smiling cornfields of fair Tyrone. We felt wistful too, and would gladly have repeopled the gentle hills and broad river with the elfin race.

"Can you tell any other story about the Foyle, Joe?"

"Do you know the Castle of Montgavlin, ma'am? I'll tell your ladyship what my mother seen there, for it was not in my time. When my mother was a wee girl, there was a mermaid lived in the river, an' on summer evenings she'd ha' sat singing on a flat stane near the edge of the water."

"What was she like, Joe?"

"I don't mind to have heered. I think she was handsome, but her hair was green."

"Did she comb her hair?"

"Sie kümmt es mit goldenem Kame,  
Und singt ein Lied dabei.  
Das hat eine wundersame  
Gewalt'ge Melodie."

"Eh, ma'am; what were you sayin'?"

"I was speaking about a German mermaid, Joe. I never thought there had been a mermaid in the Foyle."

"Deed was there. The boatmen goin' up an' down in their lighters between Derry and Strabane wad ha' seen her often. They called her Sheelah, an' there's a deep pool near Montgavlin that they still call 'Sheelah's Pool.'

"There was a Rhoda Gildea lived at the door wi' my mother, an' a harsh, ill-natured body she was. She went to draw water one evening, an' just out o' mischief she overturned Sheelah's stone. She thought the crathur didna see her, but next day, when she came home from an errand to the shop, she found Sheelah in her kitchen, putting her child on the fire. Rhoda let a cry out of her, an' ran to take the child off the fire, an' Sheelah went out at the door an' down to the river, singing:

"When I think on my stane,  
An' you think on your wean,  
We may weel speak an' look,  
But treens we'll e'en be nane."

## THE QUESTION OF CAIN.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOEY.

### CHAPTER XXIX. A NEW LIFE.

JANE MERRICK punctually kept her engagement with the concierge at the house at Neuilly. She received from Madame Moreau a report of the visit of Mr. Lisle, an assurance that the parcel left in Moreau's charge had been given to him, and the additional information that Mr. Lisle had appeared to be totally unprepared to find that madame had departed to England, and that monsieur himself was so changed she (Madame Moreau) could hardly believe he was the same person who had taken the apartment, and engaged her daughter Delphine as an attendant for the lady.

"You can hardly believe it," repeated Jane quickly. "Are you quite sure this person was the same?"

Oh, yes. Madame Moreau was quite sure; there could be no doubt at all; what she had said was only a way of speaking, it was very surely Mr. Lisle. And he had remained a good while up there, and had gone away, finally, leaving no word or message for any one. Madame civilly hoped the young couple were happily re-united, and that all was well with Madame Lisle. Jane made her but a vague reply, and returned to Paris, troubled and confounded by the result of her visit to Neuilly. She had not expected to hear anything of Mr. Lisle; she had come to believe, with her aunt, that he had merely forsaken Helen; that he should return to look for her, and, finding her gone, take no further step in reference to her, was out of Jane's calculations, and she was afraid of the effect which this inconsistent conduct might produce on Helen. Mrs. Morrison and Jane were both of opinion that she must be told; and they were surprised at the way in which, after her first agitation and tears, she took the incident.

"I am so glad, so happy, so relieved," she said, "that he was not so bad as you thought, as you were afraid he might be. And I am so thankful to know, to be quite sure, that he is living, and that no harm has come to him. You will forgive me, I am sure, if I cannot yet think much of anything else."

She said very little more on the subject, and though she was very quiet, and would sit absorbed in thought, and seemingly



unconscious of things around her, for long lapses of time, she improved in health day by day. Her aspect was too grave for her years, the impress which is not to be shaken off had been set upon her beauty; the glow, the glitter, and the gladness had passed away from it never to return, as had the girlish trust, the universal hope, and the innocence that does not fear harm, because it does not know the existence of evil; but there had come something in their place that lent to Helen a deeper and a more potent charm. The varied suffering she had undergone within a period really brief, but which seemed to her to have been endless in duration, had educated Helen's mind as years of mere teaching might have failed to educate it. The self-confidence, the fearless expectation of youth and inexperience, had departed from her for ever, but precious things had come in their place, accompanying and taking the sting out of her condemnation of herself for the grave fault of which she had really been guilty. Those precious things were the gifts of humility, of self-knowledge, and of patience; the dawning of a perception that happiness is not a flower of this world's growth, and therefore they who seek for it labour in vain, and to the hurt of their own souls; and the release, accomplished only with an almost intolerable pang, from the bondage of a love which was for the most part visionary.

Helen became aware of this release shortly after she had heard from Jane the result of her visit to the house at Neuilly; and she suffered, perhaps, as terrible agony in the first consciousness of it, as in any of the hours of miserable suspense from which she had been delivered. So many feelings went to the composition of the state of mind into which she fell, and among them there was burning shame, self-contempt, and self-condemnation. The two good women who loved the girl, and watched her with deep commiseration that was never intrusive, and patience that never gave way before her variable moods, could not, probably, define the phases through which she passed, but their sympathy availed as much as if they had accurately analysed her feelings. They regarded her as a sick person, snatched from death, and now needing to be nursed back through convalescence into health; and they did the nursing accordingly, without bothering their patient, or even so much as asking her in words how she did. Their intelligent observation of

symptoms, and judicious administration of nourishment and stimulant, brought the happiest results to the mind diseased. It was a condition of her state that Helen should but dimly, if at all, apprehend their wise and constant care of her, and it was not until long afterwards, when life had taught her many another lesson, and she had extended perceptions and enlarged sympathies of her own to help her to a comprehension of them, that she rightly understood and duly estimated the skill, the tenderness, and the sympathy with which she had been treated in that terrible sickness of the soul. But when that time came, Helen wondered at these things no longer, for she had learned the meaning of that "grace of God" that Jane had been used to speak of in their schooldays, and she knew the smile, the touch, and the whisper of the chief among its ministers—Charity; which knowing, there was no more "amazement" for her.

The time of such refreshing and establishment as this was, however, in the far future, and it is with the fever and the feebleness we have to do.

When Helen knew that Frank Lisle was not dead, but that he had made no sign, she began to feel conscious of a growing freedom. All was dim and doubtful beyond the fact that his conduct was not explained by the only solution that would have proved it to be involuntary; and after a short time of great misery, she knew that she no longer suffered from that dimness and uncertainty. Her youth asserted itself, though its elasticity was impaired; the new atmosphere of cheerful activity and happy helpful companionship aided her; the imaginary world gave place to the actual, and Helen had to realise, with a great shock of conviction, and a sense of something like self-loathing, that she no longer loved and lived upon the memory of Frank Lisle.

"I must be the worst and wickedest creature that ever lived," such were her hard thoughts of herself; "for I can bear to be without him now, and when he was with me, I did not grieve for papa. Oh, is there nothing real? Does nothing last? Or is it only I who am so fickle and so wicked?"

Thus did the unlessoned heart strive against itself, and against the inevitable law of human life. It was with feelings which she could summon up in her memory all her after days, that Helen

asked herself whether, if she really had been Frank Lisle's wife, she could ever have ceased to love him? If he had been faithful to her, if the life they had pictured to themselves had "come true," the life of the hard-working artist, and his helpful, admiring, trustful wife—what then? But Helen, for all her dreams and fancies, and for all her ignorance of life, was not devoid of reasoning faculties, and she was insensibly learning to use them; so she knew that she need not torment herself with such a vain question, for it was because Frank Lisle was not "true" that the fabric of her fancy had revealed itself as air-woven, and had vanished in the revelation.

And she? Was she false because she could bear to live without him, because she could lift her sorrow-bended head and heavy eyes, and look out once more on the fair world in which he had no more part for her? She knew very well in her pure heart, that she had loved loyally, with a great humility too, and willingness to take the lord of her life for its law in all things, small and great, and there was something beyond and different from the sad repining of a love-sorrow in the conviction that this love was a dead thing, only fit to be buried out of her sight, by no power to be raised from that death, though she should wear her weeds for it for ever.

The strangest thing about this mood of Helen's to her own perception, was the way it dealt with time. She seemed to have lost the measurement of that; between her and the past there was a great gap, a gulf with dim vapours floating up from its depths, and she sometimes asked herself whether the Helen Rhodes who now stood on the near side of that gulf was really the same Helen Rhodes who had stood upon the far side? She was still so young that she could not but make of herself her chief occupation, and her good friends made all allowance for this, while they tried to substitute other interests.

For instance, Madame Morrison laughed at Helen's French a good deal (as she had laughed at Jane's, when her niece left Miss Jerdane's establishment), and proposed that she should take lessons in the language. And then, she set her to learn some of the lighter and easier details of her own business, and she employed her occasionally to write English letters for her. Helen took to it all very kindly, and Jane proposed that she should be called Kate Nickleby, but an objection to that sportive

plan was raised by Helen. Were Madame Morrison and Jane prepared to become respectively Madame Mantalini and Miss Knagg? When Helen propounded this query, with her old smile, and brought the book and read the Mantalini scenes until the two girls cried with laughter, Jane began to feel a comfortable conviction that she would "do."

It was not very long before Helen, with all the heartfelt acknowledgment of their goodness to her that she could put into words, and carefully fencing herself from being supposed to think that any such matter was in their thoughts, broached the subject of doing something for herself! Then there arose a discussion that might have reminded the friends of that which they had held at the Hill House on the day when Helen had seen Mr. Townley Gore for the first time. Helen maintained that she should never be able to make herself sufficiently useful to Madame Morrison to be of any "real good" in the business; indeed, she told Jane she was perfectly aware—for she had found out a good deal from the young ladies—that her own share was the merest make-believe; and she wanted Jane to fulfil her promise of getting her employment as a governess. She had now some additional qualifications for that occupation, but she was still disqualified by her too good looks, her youth, and her sensitiveness. That the incident which had made so sad a difference in her life was one which she was, or her friends on her behalf were, required to regard as a drawback, never entered Helen's mind, or Madame Morrison's; the one was too innocent, the other was too sensible. Jane had some difficulty in persuading Helen to let the matter stand over for discussion at a future time, and she had only just gained her consent to this, when the first interruption of Helen's isolation from the past of her life took place. Mr. Townley Gore's letter reached Madame Morrison.

The terror with which her kind friend's suggestion that this renewal of communications, slight though it was, might lead to a proposal for her restoration to the protection of Mr. and Mrs. Townley Gore, filled Helen's heart, was accompanied by a scruple of her mind. Was she not, by shrinking from such a possibility with the unqualified dread that she had plainly displayed before this scruple occurred to her, imposing upon the generous kindness of Madame Morrison? If Mr. and Mrs. Townley Gore would indeed receive her, had she any

right to reject this means of relieving Madame Morrison from the charge of her? That view had not for a moment presented itself to her generous friend, whose sole consideration was Helen's own advantage. After fretting over it a great deal, Helen spoke to her frankly, and the matter was set at rest for her in a few sentences.

"Of course," said Helen, "if they offered to take me back, I must tell them the whole truth. They would have a right to know it; except, I suppose, I should not be bound to give up the names. I could not do that, on account both of—him—and his friend. And then, I do not think Mrs. Townley Gore would let me into her house."

"No, I suppose not," said Mrs. Morrison thoughtfully; "I never considered that necessity. And I tell you this, Helen, once for all," she added, with her characteristically brisk and decided air, "if she had to be told, and if she did agree to take you back, with my consent you should never enter her house. She was a detestable tyrant to you, when there was nothing to blame you for; what would she be with a secret to hold over you? No, no, my dear, we may look upon that matter as over and done with, and I am heartily glad your conscience has made a way of escape for mine."

How glad Helen was, she could not have told. Her eyes brightened, her tread grew lighter; her needle flew more quickly through the light tasks that were set her; she took a livelier interest in the show-rooms, and disconcerted Madame Morrison's ideas of her want of taste—founded, not unreasonably on her doggedly English mourning—by some very ingenious and original suggestions. Indeed, the "treatment of jet" on Miss Chevenix's gown which Mrs. Townley Gore was so good as to admire, and so shrewd as to recognise as a test of expense, was a "treatment" of Helen's devising. The impertinence of the agent whom Madame Morrison employed for the looking-up and stirring-up of her unpunctual customers in London, and who had found Miss Chevenix one of the most unpunctual and impracticable of the number, had been condoned by Beatrix, when she found herself enabled to pay the long outstanding bill.

"Nobody dresses me like Morrison," said Miss Chevenix when she was arranging matters with Mrs. Mabberley; "and, after all, I suppose these people have to be rude sometimes to get their money."

"No doubt," assented Mrs. Mabberley, with her usual obliging readiness.

It was September, a beautiful mild September with no chill upon it as yet, and the woods at Chantilly, at St. Cloud, at St. Germain, and elsewhere in the neighbourhood of Paris, were putting on the autumn tints that are so beautiful when one has not English woods to look at, but which sink into such insignificance when one has. Madame Morrison and her husband had made a short excursion "aux eaux," but Jane and Helen had not been away at all. There was a great deal to be done at such an establishment as Madame Morrison's, even in the slackest season, and Helen had got on very well indeed with the correspondence. Jane gave her a fair share of the work to do, and she liked it. She was well, and although she would not have consented to make the statement in words just then, she frankly admitted afterwards, in looking back upon that time, that she was happy.

A great many orders for England were on hand. Madame Morrison's country-house costumes were much admired, for she had been in, at least, second-rate favour during that wonderful time when visitors to the beautiful arbitress of fashion took twelve costumes to Compiègne, to be worn in three days. Some of the orders were for wedding-trousseaux, and, in one instance, the prospective wearer had come to Paris, and was a good deal about at Madame Morrison's. She was a pretty, rather awkward English girl, and Jane and Helen were quite interested in her as she came, day after day, with her fat, rich mamma, and had her mind expanded and her taste corrected on the subject of dress. Her name was Ellen Smith, and she has nothing to do with this story, except inasmuch as that she was the cause of Helen's being placed in an absurd and embarrassing position. The wedding order was completed, the fat, rich mamma and her pretty daughter were about to seek once more the white cliffs of Albion, and to spread astonishment, not unmingled with envy, among their female friends, for the dresses were costly and beautiful, and the owners were feasting their eyes on them previous to packing, in the last of Madame Morrison's three spacious and handsomely fitted-up showrooms. The doorways between the rooms were draped with velvet of a dark neutral tint, which did not "try" the colours that had to be displayed, and velvet divans lined the walls underneath the mirrors.



Mrs. Smith and her daughter, Jane and Helen in attendance upon them, were intent upon business, in which all four seemed interested, in the third room. Two dress-baskets lined with spotless Holland, and covered with shining leather, gaped open-lidded for their splendid load, a part of which was spread over the tables and heaped on the divans, while the four ladies were eagerly considering two objects which lay on a chair within easy range of the bride elect's bright shy eyes. Those objects were a large square of very rich Brussels lace, and a wreath of myrtle and orange-blossoms tastefully composed.

"Nothing could be more beautiful," said the bride elect, "only I never quite know how a square veil should be worn; and there's so much in the way a thing of that kind is put on; don't you think so?"

Jane assented. The fat mamma wheezed, and looked doubtful; she had misgivings about the Lancashire methods in such matters.

"It is quite easy," said Jane; "I could show you in a moment. It depends on whether you wish to wear it thus, or thus."

She held a couple of fashion-plates, with two happily impossible young women simpering at their prayer-books depicted on them, for Miss Smith's selection of a method.

"I am sure I could not look like either of those," said Miss Smith frankly; "my head is too big, and not the right shape. Could you not show me some pretty way of your own?"

"I think I can," said Jane, smiling; she liked this English girl. "Helen, your hair is dressed quite rightly. If you will allow me, Miss Smith, I will put the wreath and veil on Miss Rhodes's head, and you can judge of the effect."

This proposal was acceded to with eagerness. Helen seated herself, and Jane, having set the crown of flowers on her head, draped around her slender lissom figure and folded over her glossy braided hair the rich filmy lace; and then, bidding Helen stand up, stepped back to observe the effect.

"How extremely becoming!" said the fat mamma.

"How beautifully done!" said Miss Smith. "Thank you so very much; I

quite see it now. So simple; only two long pins and a little twist."

But at this moment Helen started violently, for in the long mirror before which she was standing meekly and patiently, like a lay-figure, she caught sight of a man's face intently gazing at her image, and two voices in the second room uttered simultaneous exclamations of "Oh! oh!"

"Who is there?" said Jane, hurrying into the second room, while Helen hastily took the pins out of the veil, and snatched the wreath off her head.

"I beg your pardon," said a gentleman, to each of whose hands a pale-faced little girl was clinging, as she stood on tiptoe trying to see more of the lovely vision in the next room. "I am afraid I have intruded; but a young lady told me I should find the representative of Madame Morrison in the show-room, and I did not find anyone in the first room, so I went on."

"I am Mrs. Morrison's niece," said Jane, directing him by a polite gesture to retrace his steps to the outer room, and accompanying him thither, much against the will of the children, who pulled at him spitefully, "and I can attend to any business you may have with her."

"My business with her is not on my own account," said the gentleman, who had by this time shaken off one of the children, and removed his hat, and he smiled as he spoke in a singularly pleasant manner. "I have been sent here by my sister, and these little ladies would come up with me. My sister is Mrs. Masters; she said Madame Morrison would know all about it. She has, unfortunately, sprained her ankle, and can't get out, and she is anxious to see Madame Morrison. I was to ask if it would be possible for Madame Morrison to call upon her."

"Mrs. Masters from Chundrapore, I suppose," said Jane.

"Yes; come home on account of the children. This is the address, madame, Avenue du Bois de Boulogne"—he handed Jane a card. "Will you have the kindness to give my sister's message?"

Jane took up the card when he had bowed himself out of the room, and read the name on it. The Paris address was written underneath the following: "Mr. Warrender, Chesney Manor."

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